



# Oregon Judicial Department Court Language Access Services

## 2018 Annual Report

# A Message from the Program Manager

## It Takes a Village – Serving Speakers of Rare Languages

According to [Language Magazine](#), about 97% of the world's population speaks 4% of the world's languages (about 280). That leaves 6,720 remaining languages, including indigenous languages. Each year, CLAS receives about five or six languages never before requested. It is no wonder that 2019 was just declared the [year of indigenous languages \(IY2019\)](#) by the United Nations. The OJD meets the needs of parties, witnesses, and victims who speak rare languages through the use of innovative interpreter training and evolving technology. In Washington County Circuit Court, a defendant required interpreting services in the Nepali language of Newari, which is classified by the United Nations as a 'definitely endangered' language. Similarly, after an international search, the Thai hill tribe language, Akha, was provided in a series of high profile cases in Polk County Circuit Court, (see page 3).

When faced with new language challenges, I depend on our staff who go above and beyond to connect with partners in local and international community groups, state agencies, interpreting networks, and academia. Immigrants tend to settle together, following work in a range of Oregon communities. In September, the [East Oregonian](#) highlighted the need for indigenous Central and North American language services. Growth trends play out in 2018 OJD data, where the number of requests for the Guatemalan language, Mam, increased 31%, primarily in Umatilla, Marion and Lincoln Counties, and indigenous language requests increased 6% overall. A recent [New York Times article](#) quoted indigenous interpreters who also accept assignments in Oregon courts or collaborate with us to locate qualified interpreters.

OJD's Court Language Access Services is committed to not just simply locating a bilingual speaker, but to ensure accurate meaning-for-meaning interpretations. It is a tall order: court interpreters must access high level executive brain functions and short term memory and be able to move smoothly between two or three languages and cultures' idioms, laws, and abstract concepts. Interpreters may interpret for populations with less than 5% literacy rates and a stark lack of knowledge of legal systems, in any country. Continuing our unique indigenous language interpreter training program which was established in 2002, the OJD collaborated with Natividad Medical Foundation to pilot [indigenous interpreter training](#) in 2018. The OJD also continues to send certified interpreters to accompany indigenous interpreters to court, providing one-on-one mentoring. Due to restrictive visa regulations, the OJD sometimes employs remote interpreting via telephone or video, with our schedulers wrangling time differences of up to 15 hours, (see page 3). Securing a means of communication for all language speakers in the courts ensures that we can meet OJD's mission to provide access to justice. I invite you to read highlights from the OJD Court Language Access Services' year in this annual report.

Sincerely,

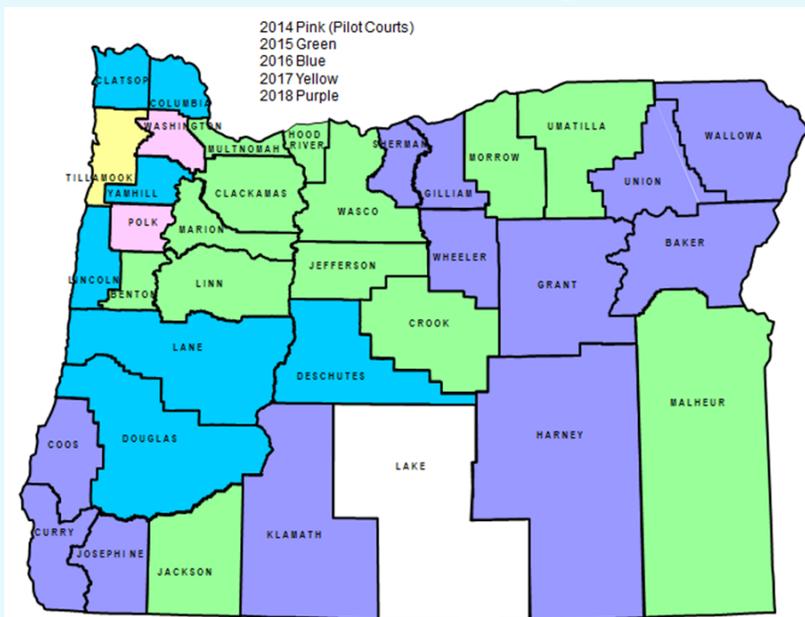


Kelly L. Mills

## OJD Court Staff Training

### OJD LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN

The [OJD Language Access Plan](#) aims to complete seven goals in three phases by the year 2021. 2018 activities focused on 1) the expansion of language services to the public, including video interpreting at the counter and family law appointments, 2) fostering relationships with communities and stakeholders such as Legal Aid Offices, Bar Associations, and Community Conversations programs.



- |  |  |
|--|--|
| Certificate of Good Standing Form  | Family Abuse Prevention Act (FAPA) Packets   |
| Citizens Review Board (CRB) Forms  | Family Law Modification Packets              |
| Civil Fee Deferral & Waiver Packets  | Forcible Entry Detainer Packet               |
| Application & Contribution Program Packet (ACP)                                    | Marijuana Diversion Packet                   |
| DUII Diversion Packets   | Sexual Abuse Protection Order (SAPO) Packets |
| Elderly Persons & Persons With Disabilities Abuse Prevention Act (EPPDAPA) Packets | Sex Offender Reporting Relief Form           |
| Eviction Forms   | Small Claims Packets                         |
| Extended Payment Plan Form   | Stalking Packets                             |
| Extreme Risk Protection Order Packet   | Tax Court Forms                              |
| Uniform Plea Petition Form   |  |

### TRANSLATIONS

There are currently 175 statewide forms translated into Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese, Korean, and Traditional Chinese found on the [OJD website](#) under the [Forms section](#), or by visiting the [CLAS webpage](#).

### LANGUAGE ACCESS EDUCATION & TRAINING

CLAS recommends that all new OJD employees complete the OJD online Language Access Basic Training (LABT) during their first year of employment. Training ensures that OJD court employees have a basic understanding of appropriate language access and serving limited English proficient court customers. The online training is interactive and takes between 1-3 hours to complete at the user's desktop.

**Module #1 Fundamentals**—Provides an overview, covers court staff roles, and cultural competencies.

**Module #2 Bilingual Skills-Building**— Prepares OJD bilingual staff for serving the public and to take the OJD bilingual test.

Supervisors should contact CLAS to set up employees for training.

### 2018 LABT Training of OJD Staff

<u>County</u>	<u>Fundamentals</u>	<u>Bilingual</u>
Lane	41	8
Clackamas	2	0
Marion	3	7
Polk	2	3
Josephine	2	1
Hood River	2	2
Multnomah	2	1
Umatilla	0	1

# Remote Interpreting

## High Quality Services and Resource Management – Remote Interpreting

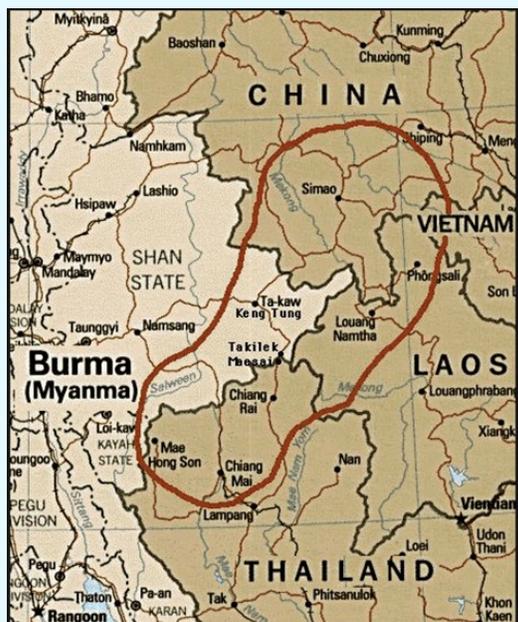
In-person interpreting services are always optimal, but in some situations the OJD can provide interpreting by phone (since 2004) or by video technology. In 2018, CLAS successfully piloted Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) in twenty-seven Malheur Circuit Court proceedings, saving over \$3,000 in travel expenses. The OJD VRI project is unique nationwide, since it delivers all technical needs at an extremely reasonable price. The OJD remote interpreting team designed and configured inexpensive gaming hardware components. A unique feature of the OJD video technology includes the ability to provide private, incidental attorney-client communications at counsel table. The VRI pilot was possible through much testing and collaboration with Malheur court staff, judges, court administrators, attorneys, interpreter schedulers, and staff interpreters. Statewide in 2018, CLAS avoided more than \$270,000 of interpreter travel expenses through a select number (1,612) of remotely interpreted assignments.



The telephonic and VRI console in Washington County

## A Unique Remote Interpreting Case

The Akha are an indigenous tribe living in the mountains of Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, and China. In 2018, CLAS was charged with providing interpreting services at a series of criminal and juvenile cases for a party who was from a mountainous Thai region where villages separated by as little as seven miles may use different languages. More than eighty language leads from around the world were followed to locate suitable interpreters. Many leads were cut short, such as finding a Thai woman who was raised by an American aunt and Akha uncle, but could not serve or travel due to a medical condition and discomfort with the subject matter. An internet search and cold calls led to a Japanese woman who had served as director of a Thai non-profit serving the Akha people. Around the same



time, the case judge referred CLAS to a native Akha woman visiting the US on holiday from Thailand. She had served as an interpreter in a Canadian case involving an international human trafficking ring in Thailand and served as an Akha-English interpreter for a Thai social services agency. When it was impossible to secure work visas for the Japanese and Thai interpreters, the court, the Department of Human Services, and CLAS collaborated to prepare the interpreters through intense training and mentoring via video, and ultimately, provided services through remote interpreting. The case continues in 2019.

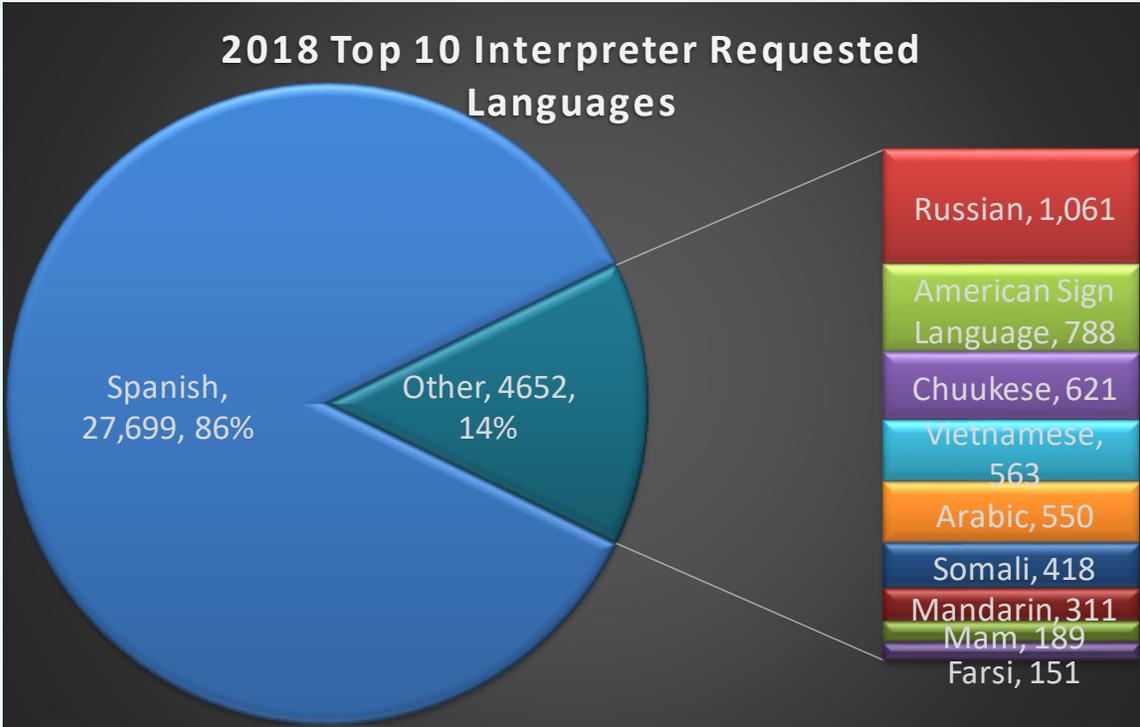
References: Wikipedia, Ethnologue

## OJD Inclusion and Fairness Activities

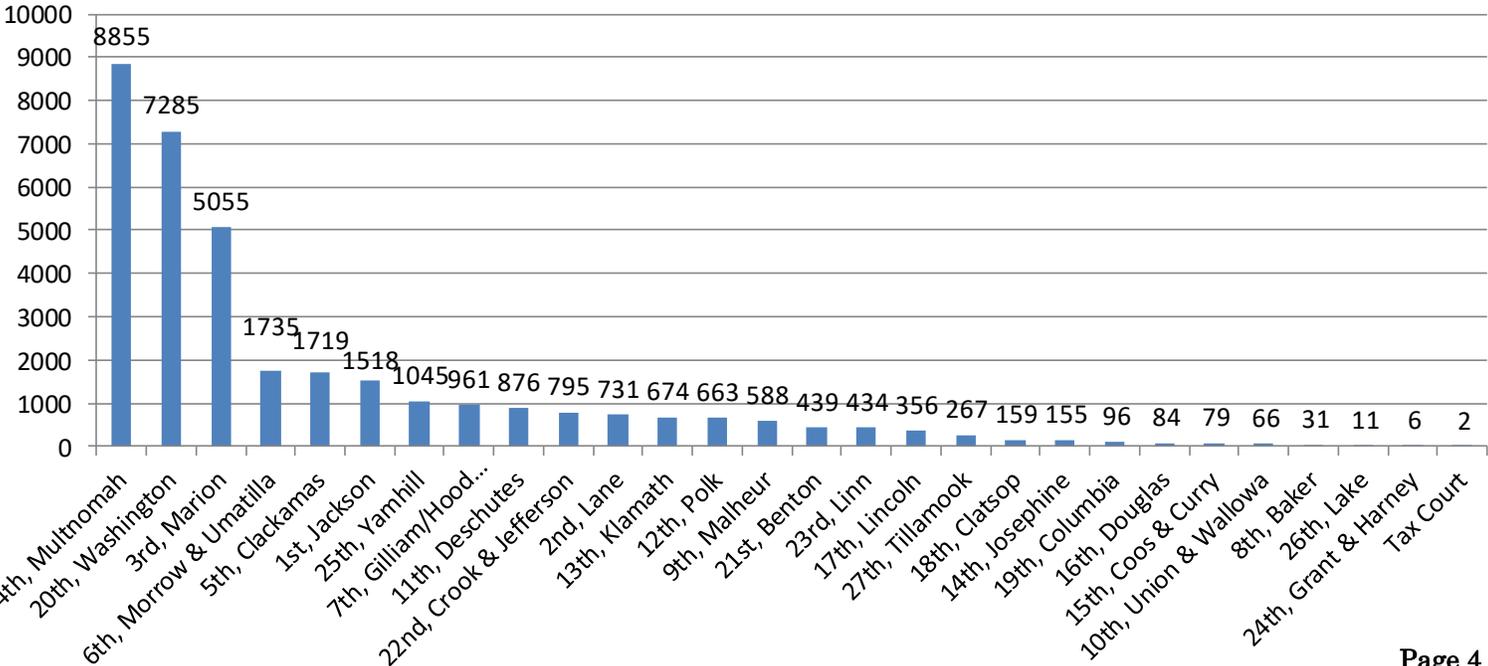
In 2018, the Oregon Supreme Court Council on Inclusion and Fairness gathered data and explored statewide initiatives. It 1) conducted a pilot survey of court users in Benton, Deschutes, Marion and Union Counties that asked them to rate their experience around access & fairness issues, 2) analyzed online tools and user data from OJD's website, and 3) worked with the Office of the State Court Administrator and local trial court administrators to assess training needs related to diversity and inclusion issues in OJD's workforce.

## Interpreter Services Data

- 34,685 requests, with a 99.75% fill-rate
- 9% (3,120) were 'last minute' - less than one business days' notice
- Requests for languages other than Spanish increased by 15%
- Requests for Spanish increased 5%
- Since 1996, there have been 278 distinct languages used in Oregon courts



## 2018 Interpreter Requests by Judicial District



# Interpreter Education & Training

New interpreter training and continuing education are professional requirements of interpreters at the OJD. CLAS provided fifty-one hours of training to over 160 individuals in 2018. Forty-six different languages and interpreters from thirteen states were represented at OJD webinars, seminars, and the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Pacific Northwest Court Interpreter Conference. National speakers provided workshops on interpreters' vicarious trauma, building interpreting skills and understanding and applying professional ethics. In 2018, CLAS took recruitment activities on the road. Judge Benjamin Bloom spoke to candidates in Medford, and Judges Katherine Weber and Thomas Hart encouraged candidates in Wilsonville and Salem. Candidates then sat for the English screening examination. The OJD added the first Oregon Certified Arabic Court Interpreter to the roster, as well as much needed new Spanish, Mandarin, Kurdish, and Macedonian credentialed interpreters. The OJD Roster is available on our [webpages](#).

Chief Justice Martha Walters presided over the Swearing In Ceremony for the 2018 newly credentialed interpreters.



## We Fondly Remember

Paul E. Perona, former Lead Scheduler with CLAS, passed away suddenly and tragically on November 16, 2018 following an accident in Arizona. He is survived by his children Erica and Stephen, as well as his father, brother, two grandsons, and three nephews. Paul had recently left OJD in September 2018 to move to Prescott, AZ to care for his father and return to the place of his childhood. Prior to working for the OJD, he served in the United States Air Force and retired from the Federal Bureau of Prisons. Paul was active and loved nature, horses, and participating in mounted shooting competitions. His co-worker, Karen Card, remembers Paul as a man who pursued his dreams, was fair, honest, true to his beliefs, willing to grow and listen, and worthy of respect. We will remember him for his extraordinary work ethic, his “cowboy” way, his sense of humor, and his leadership on the winning CLAS laser tag team. He will not be forgotten.



- All the dedicated and professional court interpreters who provide services to the OJD
- Oregon Supreme Court Chief Justice Martha L. Walters
- Nancy Cozine, State Court Administrator
- Oregon Supreme Court Justice Lynn Nakamoto, OSCCIF Chair
- Oregon Supreme Court Justice Adrienne Nelson, OSCCIF member
- The Honorable Oscar Garcia, Washington County Circuit Court, OSCCIF member
- The Honorable Melvin Oden-Orr, Multnomah County Circuit Court, OSCCIF member
- The Honorable Eva J. Temple, Umatilla & Morrow Counties, OSCCIF member
- The Honorable Nan Waller, Multnomah County Circuit Court, OSCCIF member
- Lane Borg, Executive Director, Public Defense Services, OSCCIF member
- Cathryn Bowie, Librarian, Oregon State Law Library, OSCCIF member
- Sophorn Cheang, Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, Governor's Office, OSCCIF member
- Jeff Hall, Deschutes County Trial Court Administrator, OSCCIF member
- John Haroldson, Benton County District Attorney, OSCCIF member
- Leola McKenzie, Director, Juvenile & Family Court Programs Division, OSCCIF member
- Diane Morse, Marion County Trial Court Administrator, OSCCIF member
- Jonathan Puente, Director of Diversity & Inclusion, Oregon State Bar, OSCCIF member
- Representative Tawna Sanchez, Oregon House District 43, OSCCIF member
- Janet W. Steverson, Dean of Diversity and Inclusion, Lewis and Clark College, OSCCIF member
- Angelica R Vega, Executive Director, Legal Aid Services of Oregon, OSCCIF member
- The Honorable Cheryl Albrecht, Multnomah County Circuit Court
- The Honorable Benjamin Bloom, Jackson County Circuit Court
- The Honorable Katherine Weber, Clackamas County Circuit Court
- Tammi Allison, Portland Community College
- Bryant Baehr and OJD Enterprise Technology Services Division
- Oregon Health Authority and Oregon Council on Health Care Interpreters
- Mary Herndon, Family Law Facilitator, Marion County



- OJD Court Language Access Services staff (left) Bianca Pineda, Carla Farrell, Cassie Bernier, Charity Hall, Christine Morgan, Edward Alletto, Enrique Andrade, Heidi O'Shaughnessy, Jess Kincaid, John Mathis, Joshua Phillips, Karen Card, Kelly Mills, Kim Knox, Megan Gotchall, Melanie DeLeon, Michaele Gearheart, Monica Juarez-Mercado, Monica Mehlhoff, Monica Stratton, and Yvette Tamamoto



## **Court Language Access Services**

1163 State Street

Salem, OR 97301

**Kelly Mills, Program Manager**

503-986-7004

**Interpreter Certification & Training**

503-731-3283

## **Mission Statement**

Court Language Access Services provides linguistic access to the Oregon State Courts through trained ethical interpreters, education of the court and responsible resource management.



Schedule an Interpreter

[www.courts.ojd.gov](http://www.courts.ojd.gov)

[www.courts.ojd.gov/CLAS](http://www.courts.ojd.gov/CLAS)

[Schedule An Interpreter](#)



CLAS Homepage